

Appl. No. 09/529,575  
Amendment dated May 23, 2005  
Reply to Office Action mailed December 23, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-30. (Canceled)

31. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article at least a portion of which comprises a protease inhibitor, wherein the article comprises from about 0.0001% to about 30%, by weight, of the protease inhibitor; the protease inhibitor has an  $IC_{50}$  of about 500  $\mu$ M or less, as measured by a General Fecal Protease Method; the protease inhibitor is selected from the group consisting of 4-(2-aminoethyl)-benzenesulfonyl fluoride hydrochloride, hexamidine and its salts, pentamidine and its salts, and mixtures thereof; and wherein an extract of at least a portion of the article produces at least a 10% reduction in substrate hydrolysis by a protease in an Absorbent Article Test Method.

32. (Original) The article of claim 31 wherein the  $IC_{50}$  is no more than 100  $\mu$ M.

33-35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 31 wherein the extract of at least a portion of the absorbent article produces a 20% reduction in substrate hydrolysis by a protease in an Absorbent Article Test Method.

37-40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 31, wherein the absorbent article comprises a delivery system for releasably containing and delivering the protease inhibitor to at least a portion of the skin of a wearer of the article and wherein said delivery system and the delivery system contains the protease inhibitor.

42. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 41, wherein the delivery system is in the form of a skin care composition and the skin care composition comprises from about 0.01% to about 50%, by weight, of the protease inhibitor.

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43. (Original) The article of claim 42, wherein the skin care composition is transferable to the skin of a wearer.
44. (Original) The article of claim 41, wherein the delivery system comprises a microcapsule, an absorbent material, a cell, an adhesive, a skin care composition, a nanophase particulate structure, a solid support, or combinations thereof.
45. (Original) The article of claim 41, wherein the delivery system is activatable by moisture, heat, or pressure, or combination thereof, and wherein the delivery system releases the protease inhibitor when activated.
46. (Original) The article of claim 41, wherein the delivery system contains the protease inhibitor as a powder, a flake, a particle, a solution, a suspension, a dispersion, an emulsion, or combination thereof.
47. (Canceled)
48. (Original) The article of claim 31, wherein the absorbent article comprises a wearer-contacting surface having the protease inhibitor disposed on at least a portion thereof.
49. (Original) The article of claim 48, wherein the wearer-contacting surface is a topsheet, a leg cuff, a side panel, or a waist region.
50. (Original) The article of claim 49, wherein a skin care composition containing the protease inhibitor is disposed on at least a portion of the wearer-contacting surface.
51. (Original) The article of claim 50, wherein the wearer-contacting surface is the topsheet.
52. (Original) The article of claim 51, wherein the topsheet comprises one or more regions that do not contain the skin care composition.
53. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 51, wherein the skin care composition is disposed on the topsheet in a plurality of stripes.